

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----111712Z 007103 /41
O 111653Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9342

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 00452

NODIS

DEPARTMENT PASS TO EDMONDSON

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PFOR, UK, RH
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: CONVERSATION WITH DUFF

REF: STATE 4644

1. EMBASSY OFFICER SAW TONY DUFF JANUARY 11 AND RE-ITERATED MESSAGE IN REFTEL. DUFF REPLIED THAT THE BRITISH SHUTTLE TEAM DID NOT INTEND TO BREAK OFF THE TRIP PRECIPITOUSLY AND THAT HE REGRETTED IF THIS IMPRESSION HAD BEEN CONVEYED TO THE DEPARTMENT. DUFF SAID THAT IF A DECISION IS REACHED TO BRING RICHARD BACK TO LONDON WE WOULD OF COURSE BE INFORMED IN ADVANCE BUT THAT TIMING MIGHT NOT PERMIT MUCH PRIOR CONSULTATION. ONCE RICHARD HAS RETURNED, HOWEVER, DUFF WOULD HOPE FOR IMMEDIATE CONSULTATIONS WITH US IN LONDON. BUT AS THINGS STAND NOW, RICHARD WILL LIKELY CONTINUE WITH HIS ITINERARY REGARDLESS OF THE PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS. HE THEN WOULD RETURN HOME TO ANNOUNCE A POSTPONEMENT IN RECONVENING THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WITHOUT FORECLOSING THE POSSIBILITY OF ANOTHER ROUND OF SHUTTLING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

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2. NO DECISION ON HOW BEST TO PROCEED WITH THE CURRENT RICHARD TRIP WILL BE REACHED UNTIL JANUARY 13. THE FOREIGN OFFICE IS AWAITING RICHARD'S REPORTS OF HIS TALKS WITH KAUNDA AND NYERERE, AND CROSLAND WILL BE IN LUXEMBOURG THROUGHOUT THE PRECEDING DAY.

3. DUFF SAID HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT THE RICHARD SHUTTLE WILL BEAR FRUIT. SMITH AND VORSTER SEEM UN- PREPARED TO MOVE BEYOND "THE CONTRACT" OF ANNEX C AND VORSTER'S REFERENCE TO "BANKABLE ASSURANCES" WAS VAGUE AT BEST. ON THE BLACK SIDE, THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS ARE NOT READY TO GIVE AN UNAMBIGUOUS COMMITMENT THAT THE GUERRILLA WAR WILL STOP ONCE AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT IS ESTABLISHED. THEIR APPARENT DECISION OVER THE WEEKEND TO BACK THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO THE EXCLUSION OF OTHER NATIONALIST LEADERS UNDERMINES THE FORUM OF GENEVA AND MERELY INVITES SMITH TO GO FOR A SEPARATE DEAL. FINALLY, RICHARD'S TALK WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT LEADERSHIP JANUARY 10 REVEALED THAT NEITHER NKOMO NOR MUGABE IS WILLING TO DISCUSS AN ORDERLY TRANSFER OF POWER EXCEPT ON THEIR OWN TERMS. NEITHER RECOGNIZES THE REALITY OF WHERE POWER LIES AND NEITHER HAS BUDGED FROM THE FRONT'S GENEVA FORMULA OF A 20/5 DIVISION IN A COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

4. EMBASSY OFFICER COMMENTED THAT HE HAD NOT HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT VORSTER HAD BEEN AS UNWILLING TO EXPLORE SOLUTIONS BEYOND ANNEX C AS DUFF APPARENTLY BELIEVED. DUFF PICKED UP RICHARD'S CABLED REPORT OF THE VORSTER CONVERSATION AND READ PORTIONS ALOUD. VORSTER MADE

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S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 00452

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REPEATED REFERENCES TO THE CONTRACTUAL NATURE OF ANNEX C, TO HIS ASSUMPTION THAT THE FRAMEWORK OF THE FIVE POINTS HAD BEEN AGREED BY ALL PARTIES, AND TO HIS COMMITMENT TO GUARANTEE SMITH'S GOOD FAITH ONLY ON THAT

BASIS. VORSTER ADDED THERE HAD EVEN BEEN THE TACIT ASSUMPTION SHARED BY KISSINGER, SMITH AND VORSTER

THAT THE CONFERENCE TO ORGANIZE THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE ONE WHITE DELEGATION AND ONE BLACK DELEGATION. HE INSISTED THAT SMITH WOULD BE "OUT ON HIS EAR" IF THE RHODESIAN ATTEMPTED TO CHANGE THE FIVE POINTS. AS FOR PUSHING SMITH TO COMPROMISE, VORSTER SAID, "WE HAVE STUCK OUR NECKS OUT AS FAR AS WE CAN . . . WE CAN'T DECIDE THEIR FUTURE FOR THEM AND WE WON'T PRESS OR THREATEN THEM." VORSTER HAD IMPLIED, DUFF SAID, THAT IF THE BRITISH CAN REACH SOME AGREEMENT WITH SMITH THEN HE (VORSTER) MIGHT ARGUE THE CASE ON ITS MERITS BUT HE WOULD TAKE NO HAND IN FORCING SMITH TO ACCEPT NEW PROPOSALS.

5. COMMENT: DUFF IS PERSUADED THAT THE RICHARD MISSION IS ALREADY SPUTTERING. HE IMPLIED THAT CROSLAND SHARES THIS VIEW AS WELL. DUFF ALSO SEEMED FRUSTRATED THAT CURRENT EFFORTS HAVE PROVEN FUTILE AT LEAST IN PART BECAUSE OF PREVIOUS AMERICAN COMMITMENTS TO VORSTER AND SMITH WHICH THE BRITISH HAD NOT ENDORSED.

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